



US Army Recruiting Command



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USAREC OVERVIEW



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U.S. Army Recruiting Command's Virtual Recruiting Center

Family Information Cell (FIC)



General Information and Contact Operations:

- The U.S. Army Recruiting Command's (USAREC) Family Information Cell (FIC) was created within the Virtual Recruiting Center (VRC) to augment the Future Soldier Training Program (FSTP) by engaging the Spouses and Family members of newly enlisted Future Soldiers with the intent of integrating them at the earliest possible moment into the Army life.
- The FIC's mission is to dispel myths and rumors related to Army service, alleviate pre-ship anxieties, educate, and stress the importance of enrollment and completion of Army Family Team Building (AFTB) courses. The FIC is designed to support Families of Future Soldiers and Trainees until they reach their first duty station and are handed off to gaining unit Family Readiness Groups (FRG) or other resources if FRG's are not readily available.
- All married Future Soldiers are identified by the FIC team and initial contact actions are conducted through a combination of direct telephonic, email and social media contact strategies.
- Participation in the FIC program and website initiatives are completely voluntary. If the decision is made to participate, new Family members are given an opportunity to meet, interact and develop a common bond via digital platforms and resources as they move with their Future Soldier and Trainee through the enlistment and training process. Family members often support each other as they encounter similar concerns and issues.



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FIC Services Provided



Services Provided:

- The FIC team within the Virtual Recruiting Center (VRC) is staffed by seasoned Army Spouses who provide a wide variety of experience with Army Family Team Building (AFTB), Family Readiness Groups (FRG), Deployment, Permanent Change of Station (PCS) preparation and overall Army Family life. These experiences are leveraged into all interactions with new Army Family members to ensure they are prepared for the transition and feel adequately welcomed into the Army Family.
- The Family Information Website (www.armyfic.com) is used to enhance the ability for Family members to ask questions and seek information while interacting directly with others across the nation, and an experienced staff. This thriving online community of Family members and FIC team member's uses a forum/threaded discussion model to provide individuals with the ability to research information, ask questions, discuss issues and generally socialize through the use of a moderated topic discussion and blogging.
- Periodic live chats are also conducted both on the FIC website and FIC social media platforms. In these instances, FIC staff members are available 'real-time' to discuss topics of interest and provide information to new Army Spouses and Family members.



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FIC Introduction and Transition

The earliest introduction of the FIC, associated Army programs and support systems available to the new Soldier and their Spouse is critical to ensure a smooth and positive transition from civilian life to the Army Family.

Initial Contact Actions:



Telephonic: All married Future Soldiers receive a direct telephone contact attempt by our FIC Representatives. If contact is successful, direct communication with the new Spouse is often established.



Email: Once contact has been established with the spouse or Future Soldier, they are sent an FIC Welcome letter to their verified email address. This letter will introduce the FIC as well as:

- o Welcome them to the Army Family
- o Provides information for Army Support Programs and links (TRICARE, AER, DEERs and others)
- o Provides a link to the AFTB (Army Family Team Building) classes
- o Provides links to the Spouse and the TRICARE Standard Handbook
- o Provides information on the Future Soldier Family Facebook page dedicated to Family Members



FIC Online Community: During FIC enrollment, the Spouse is registered and introduced to the *FIC Online Community* at www.armyfic.com which provides a "one-stop" for information from the sustainment phase to the first-duty station resources.



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FIC Sustainment Operations



Future Soldier follow through on the commitment to enlist and ship hinges on new Soldier's being confident that Family members will be provided for while they are away completing Initial Active Duty Training (IADT)

Online Community/Support Network: Spouses are provided an opportunity to register and participate in the FIC website www.armyfic.com, if contacted prior to the Future Soldier's ship date. This website has been established to aid in the development of rapport and camaraderie as well as provide an introduction to Army Family values and support services through a combination of online interactions as follows:

- Direct communication and interaction with FIC staff and other new Army Spouses across the Nation who share the same questions, concerns, and apprehensions about life in the Army.
- Training classes and links to online resources.
- Topic Discussion/Threaded Forums covering a wide array of topics from sending mail and phone calls to TRICARE, Finance and DEERS.
- Spouse Mentors who represent a group of our online users that have completed the FIC program through FDS (First Duty Station) and have volunteered to continue to participate in the FIC website. These mentors provide real time and up-to-date information for new spouses regarding housing, child care facilities, schools, in-processing procedures, as they have just recently accomplished the same action themselves.



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FIC Sustainment Operations



Ongoing Support:

- **Email:** FIC staff members receive continuous incoming email activity requesting assistance and specific guidance for essentially any issues new Spouses and Family members encounter (i.e. Power of Attorney, Travel and Transportation, Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP) enrollment, and Command Sponsorship).
- **Hotline:** The FIC maintains a toll free phone-line manned Monday through Friday from 0800-2400 EST , that is provided to new Spouses and Family members as a resource should an urgent situation arise.
- **Online Chat Operations:** The FIC conducts live chats and provides an opportunity for live interaction between Family Members. These chats are moderated by the FIC Representatives.



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FIC Integration Initiatives

Through educating and assisting new Soldiers and their Families prior to arrival at the first duty station, the potential for a smoother integration into the unit is greatly improved. Additionally, the Soldier arrives confident and prepared to be an immediate asset and productive team member.

Integration Actions:

First Duty Station (FDS) Awareness: Upon receiving confirmation of FDS from their Soldier, the FIC Representatives can assist with locating the following information services for their installation:

- **Spouse Mentor Network :** This resource through chats and the armyfic.com website, connects new Spouse's directly with other Spouse's who are already in position at the gaining FSD, providing immediate real-time information.
- **Gaining Installation Points of Contact:** Spouses are provided direct links, phone numbers or installation websites to the required offices they will need to communicate with in order to initiate incoming Soldier actions. Having the capability to connect Spouse's with the appropriate human resources expedites and facilitates booth transition. The following critical resources are provided at a minimum:



➤ **Housing Office:** Spouses are informed that they may have the opportunity to apply for housing before moving, which reduces housing wait time or temporary lodging issues.

➤ **Transportation Office:** Provides the earliest opportunity to schedule and coordinate transportation and cross-country moves.

➤ **Spouse Employment Opportunities:** Provides local and installation-



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FIC Forum Posting Examples

Posted 03 March 2014 - 09:01 PM

I got an email in early February 2013 right after my husband had finished his paperwork with a recruiter to join these forums. I ignored it at first- I wasn't sure what it was or how I would even benefit from this. One day when I was clearing out my emails, I saw it again. I just about deleted it and out of curiosity, I clicked on it and signed up.

A year later, now I realize that it was one of the best things I ever did! It helped both my husband and I get ready for him to leave for basic. I had more of an understanding on what to expect. Reading others' experiences really does help. I knew how Family Day and Graduation would kind of go. I knew more things than my husband did while he was in basic and AIT. I knew what to do to get ready for our move. I knew what each form was and what it was for. I knew to get a POA. I knew what DLA was and were able to get it- my husband had to clue what that was.

While my husband was in AIT, his father passed away and I was panacking. Mostly because he was 2,000 miles away from me at the time and his family was another 2,000 south from where I was in Mexico. I didn't know if they would even let him travel out of the country and I had no idea where to even begin on what to do. Thanks to these forums, I came in, asked and got a quick response. They gave me all the information I needed about the Red Cross. Two hours later, my husband was able to call me and we set up for him to leave and go to Mexico the very next morning.

Now that we are here at Fort Carson, I met amazing ladies through here and they have been so helpful and have turned out to be such great friends- if I would've ignored that email and deleted it, I don't know what I would do without them!

I just felt like sharing how wonderful it has been for me to have joined FIC and I hope others feel the same way about it.

-Brenda 😊

✓ Like This



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FIC Forum Posting Examples



Posted 08 March 2014 - 08:49 PM

Here we go !!

Thanks to all of you but I need to said this , thanks to the ARMY I have met wonderful women that had been in this new journey two wonderful little angels !!!! The ARMY is more than a government institution is a ARMY family , I have learn so much of all the women and men in this page and other pages . Most of them are my inspirations and the one that made me being strong everyday . Please if any other lady are reading me please , open your heart and arms to some of this amazing ladies in here and just be a support system to each other !!! I have been blessed Santana1228 and Alexandra Moll are amazing woman that make my days !!! My girl Tori Santana sent to my son an ACU uniform for him ... he loves it and she had been all through this days comfort me and supporting me , the same Alexandra Moll ... thank you girls and I hope I have and do the same to you too !!!! Love you girls !!!!!

 Edited by nanapr, 08 March 2014 - 08:52 PM.

 Like This

Ileana Velasco-Rodriguez

Because our eyes met then I saw my destiny in there !!!!!

02/19/14 BCT Fort Jackson

05/05/14 AIT Fort Lee



Report


MultiQuote

Quote

#2

Posted 08 March 2014 - 09:00 PM

So awesome! I love hearing how the spouses on this site encourage one another.

 Like This



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FIC Forum Posting Examples



Posted 18 February 2014 - 03:29 PM

Hi all,

My husband recently left for BCT and I am trying to prepare myself for after when we end up being stationed somewhere. I was reading and kept seeing the wives talk about joining FRG? I read of some bad experiences but I don't know what it actually is? I'm very nervous to leave my home. I've always been a bit of a black sheep. I don't like girly things and I hate the color pink. A lot of the marine wives I know say that the other wives they gave met on their journeys were very girly and into arts and crafts and being mothers, cool for some people. I'm a gym fanatic covered in tattoos. I'm worried that the life we signed up for might not fit me well.

Sorry this was more of a vent lol but please If anyone can let me know what it's like I would appreciate it.

Thanks!

✓ Like This

Report

MultiQuote

Quote

#2

Posted 18 February 2014 - 04:01 PM

You'll meet people of all different kinds. There are just as many different kinds of Army wives as there are regular wives. 😊 I'm definitely not a girly girl and most of the friends I've made aren't either. I've met some who like to scrapbook, some who like to coupon, some who like to be outdoors and hike, some who like to work out and some who just like to chill at home, and some who do all of the above, lol. The wife that heads up my FRG is a mountain climber and I'm pretty sure she volunteers with the local search and rescue team that works on the nearby mountains. So don't worry. You'll meet people with similar interests to your own. And the FRGs are not the only place to meet people. Speaking to your interests - pretty much every post has at least one gym, if not more, and they're free for you to go to. There's even a number of different classes you can sign up for, so if you don't find people with similar interests in your FRG (which I personally have yet to really connect with anyone in mine) you can meet people there. 😊

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FIC Social Media Overview



- The U.S. Army Future Soldier Family Facebook Page. (<https://www.facebook.com/usarmyfuturesoldierfamily>) is an additional resource available to new Army spouses and Family members, and is monitored by the VRC staff M-F from 0730-2400 EDT, and on Sundays from 0730-2400 EDT.
- New Army Spouses and Family members are given the link to the Facebook Page in their FIC Welcome Letter.
- This social media platform provides an additional online forum for new Army Spouses/Family members to meet, obtain information and support one in the transition from a civilian to an Army Family.
- Hourly posts are made on the Facebook page by VRC staff. These posts are made with two goals: To provide new Army Family members with information about Army programs (TRICARE, MWR, etc.), and to offer encouragement and moral support to all Army Family members.
- Visitors to the page are allowed to post content, individual articles, or contact VRC staff through private messages. All timeline and article posts receive a response within 20 minutes during hours of operation.



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FIC Social Media Examples



- The above post was created on March 12th 2014 by the VRC staff, and was intended to offer encouragement and entertainment to new Army Spouses and Family members.
- Within the course of two days the post “went viral,” garnering the following interaction: 149,160 Likes - 10,015 Shares and 1,983 Comments. At last count, the post was viewed by 9,408,512 people.



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FIC Social Media Examples



- This above post was created on February 18th 2014, and it quickly reached viral status garnering the following interaction: 172,890 Likes – 6,472 Shares and 1,492 Comments. This post was viewed by over 2.5 million Facebook Users. Posts such as these, increase the reach of our page and assist in spreading awareness and the Army message. An example of this increase in awareness includes over 2,000 new fans added to the U.S. Army Future Soldier Family Facebook Page in the month of February.



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FIC Social Media Examples

The below comments provide insight into how social media is used to provide Family members with information, encouragement and moral support throughout the pre-ship and training process:



Mat N Alexx Dunn



Love love love the interaction. Helps being a newly armywife and the support is very comforting.

Like · Comment · about 2 months ago



Nikki Burris Rhodes



Very helpful information!

Like · Comment · about an hour ago



Kiersten Clancy



This page has been very helpful with transitioning from wife to army wife! I had so many questions and this page answered so many of them!

Like · Comment · about a week ago



Aria Ortiz



We love this site, thanks for all updates and all inspirational messages.

Like · Comment · about a month ago



Lisa Perez



Love this site, it's always nice to get updated on a lot of different a things.. My soldier has been in for three years and still use this site..

Like · Comment · about a month ago



Kate Bianchi



Awesome page! Helps me get through my lonely days of my husband's BCT.

Like · Comment · about 2 weeks ago



Katie Hale



I'm the wife of a future soldier and this page has answered many of my important questions. Its a great source of support from other families going through the same thing and the information available is invaluable. Thank you. :)

Like · Comment · about 2 months ago



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